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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By B. W. BACON. ("New Testament Handbooks," edited by Shailer Mathews.) New York : Macmillan, 1900. Pp. xv + 285. \$0.75.

THIS wonderfully compact little book is a genuine contribution to the literary and historical study of the New Testament writings. It is at once learned and independent, showing constant traces of first-hand study of the books it handles, notably the historical ones. In dealing with these our author has felt forced by want of space into an absolute-ness of statement, for which he makes apology in his preface. And certainly some things, especially in the notes, do sound overconfident "in matters dubious." But, on the whole, an unusually candid and judicial spirit pervades the book. This objectivity is at once cause and effect of his attitude to early tradition, which is one of the chief merits of the book. His motto is "*through tradition back to fact.*" But he sees the limits of what criticism can reasonably ask of tradition. "Tradition retains only that element of the truth with which it was directly concerned." Thus, as regards the five historical books, "the names attached by early report . . . represent in each case the first and most important link in the long process" by which these records of the church's heritage took final shape. "The tradition is partly historical, partly inferential and theoretical, with a liberal element of legend. It is for the modern critic to analyze and interpret it." "Back," then, "to second-century tradition : for its testimony will repay another sifting" (pp. vii, 53, 274, 277 ff.).

The following are his results: Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 50 A. D. (Corinth); 2 Cor. 6:14—7:1, and 1 Corinthians, 53–4 A. D. (Ephesus); 2 Cor. 10:1—13:10 (Ephesus), fragments in pastoral epistles (Troas ?), 2 Corinthians, 54 A. D.; Romans, and letter of commendation to Ephesus (Rom. 16:1–23), 55 A. D. (Corinth); Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 58–9 A. D. (Rome); Philippians and 2 Timothy (additions excepted), 60 A. D.; Mark (Rome), 75–80 A. D.; Hebrews (to Rome), 1 Peter (from Rome), 75–85 A. D.; Matthew (Jerusalem ?), 80–90 A. D.; James (Rome ?), Jude ("Asia"), 85–90 A. D.; Luke–Acts (Antioch ?), 85–95 A. D.; Revelation (Ephesus), 95 A. D.; 1–3 John (Ephesus), 95–100 A. D.; John's gospel (Ephesus), 100–110 A. D.; 2 Peter, 100–150 A. D.

Here the gap 60–75 at once challenges attention. It probably points to a real defect in our author's views. Indeed, as to 1 Peter he himself has qualms. He considers it written by Silvanus "with the

imprimatur of Peter," yet cannot decide to accept the tradition (as he should on his principles) that the apostle suffered under Nero — seemingly in 64 (1 Clem. v, vi) — and date the epistle about 63-4.¹

Of course, Professor Bacon assigns to this epoch, 60-75, the silent growth of the sources of the synoptics and Acts, which he views as "the outcome of a longer and more complex growth than most critics admit." Yet his observations on this topic, acute and suggestive as they are, hardly warrant his conclusion that even Mark is not earlier than 75 A. D. Holding the "two document" theory to be, broadly speaking, justified, he proceeds to qualify it by making Mark itself a compilation from written sources, embellished with graphic touches from Peter's own discourses. This work John Mark issued for readers already familiar with the *logia*, as a sort of supplement to the same (hence the slight logian element in Mark). Our Matthew is the third stage in a process starting with the Aramaic *logia* (Matthew¹). Matthew² was "an edition in Greek supplied with an outline of the public ministry and passion, and a very sparing enrichment of the discourses;" while Matthew³ is "a complete recast, grouping the discourse material (with additions) into five great masses, taking up the additional material of Mark, retouching much of the parallel material of Matthew², and supplying some legendary accretions in connection with the external envelope formed by chaps. 1, 2, 28: 9-20, and some kindred matter (14: 28-31; 17: 24-27; 27: 3-8, 19, 24 f., 51b-53, 62-66). Here the evidence for Matthew² is very shadowy, especially in view of its supposed dependence on the source specially apparent in Luke. To this "proto-gospel," combining narrative and discourse (*e. g.*, the parables peculiar to Luke), our author devotes much attention. By it he explains the one-third of the discourse material common to Matthew and Luke which has most verbal identity, and which "by its content and character is unlikely to have ever formed part of the *Logia*." But when he says that the presence of this element in Matthew² is thus accounted for,² one feels that he has largely removed the need of assuming Matthew² at all. Again, "the remarkable tendency of Matthew³ to reproduce Mark in a simplified form, with variations coincident with Luke, finds explanation in the influence of an earlier source which all our evangelists employ, but

¹As he makes the "two years" of Acts 28: 30 end early in 60, and does not admit any subsequent release, he is the freer to accept such a date, save for his views on the persecution involved in the epistle.

²Also the parallel narratives: Matt. 8: 5-10 = Luke 7: 1-9; Matt. 8: 18-22 = Luke 9: 57-62 (*cf.* 14: 26-35).

only Luke has utilized in its most fully developed form." That is, the "secondary features of Mark" represent deviations from this proto-gospel (*i. e.*, its narrative material, of which Mark makes "meager use"); and this, "when used as the groundwork of Luke, was at an advanced stage of development, some parts being far later than others in origin, and the narrative was already supplied with its sequel on the preaching of the gospel to the nations" (p. 224).

Here the author follows Feine in supposing a single document to underlie Luke and Acts, chaps. 6-12. Whether this be so or not—and a close study of Acts has left me more doubtful than before—one may well doubt two assumptions connected with his treatment of the sources of Acts. These are (1) that similarity of standpoint between Luke and Acts must needs be due to a document or documents used in both, and (2) that what Luke 1:1-4 implies as to the use of documents for the story of Christ's ministry applies equally to the story of the apostolic church. But (1) the author of Acts would naturally write the Palestinian part of his second book in the spirit which he had learned from his favorite source for his first book, even though now he had no such document to guide him, but only oral accounts gathered from persons more or less sharing that standpoint; and (2) oral traditions might well be all that was to hand for the later history, which had not the value for Christian piety attaching to the words and deeds of the Messiah. No doubt the force of the latter consideration depends largely on the date of Acts; and this Bacon gives as "late in the reign of Domitian," say 90-95. But for one who sees no clear sign pointing beyond 75 as the lower limit for Acts, it has a good deal of value. In any case, he has made his view of Acts largely determine his dating of the synoptics; and for those who, like the present writer, regard his handling of Acts as the section least free from bias, this will make his dating of Mark at least very doubtful. The notes on pp. 213-17, dealing with Acts, show that "vigor and rigor" which Matthew Arnold deprecated in some German criticism. Statements such as these will win the assent only of minds of rather a formal order. "Personal interest in [Paul] the missionary hero had disappeared behind reverence for the apostolic function." Paul "is not even reckoned an apostle, save in the broader sense, along with and after Barnabas, but a subordinate.³ Peter receives the special Pauline revelation, the true apostle of the gentiles [only if there be

³Imagine a partisan of "the apostolic function" making the gospel reach the gentile world and its center (1:8) through "a subordinate."

no historic *progress* in Acts, but only the play of categories]. Yet the writer is anything but unfriendly to Paul" (pp. 216 f.). A sentence like the last must needs make one doubt whether our author has rightly caught the spirit of Acts, even on his own theory that its writer was "a Hellenistic Jew of the same type and period as the author of our Matthew, though a far more skilful and cultured writer." He finds the formative spirit of Acts to be typically Jewish; "the traces of working over attributable to a gentile hand, if any exist, are extremely slight, superficial, and doubtful." This is paradox. Ramsay may not be right in all he has said about Acts and its author; but surely the "Travel Diary" is not the only thing that gives Acts its gentile and Pauline flavor. It extends far beyond the limits of that source, which Bacon confines to the "we"-passages. This restriction seems to the present writer quite arbitrary. Their vividness and interest in concrete details are paralleled by passages in every part of the latter half of Acts. It looks, then, as if it all originated in the experience of one mind, Luke's. We have only to change the relation of the Jewish and gentile elements in Bacon's assumed Hellenistic author, and say that Luke had been a Jewish proselyte, to be able to do justice to the Jewish element in Acts other than what is due to its sources of information in large parts of chaps. 1-12. Paul's companion, who was able to appreciate and report Jewish Christian thought and feeling as he does in Acts, chaps. 22-26, was quite able to compose chaps. 1-12.⁴

We have dwelt on Acts because it is crucial for many problems of the apostolic age. Thus Bacon feels free to solve those touching Acts, chap. 15, and Gal., chap. 2, in the most arbitrary way, separating Acts 15:1-18 — a conference on gentile freedom in general, followed by Peter's accompanying Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, Gal. 2:1-11 — from the substance of Acts 15:19 ff., a garbled account of a second conference occasioned by complaints that Peter and others were disregarding the "law of meats" in mingling with gentile Christians. In the latter conference "the elder brethren" in Jerusalem, in the absence of Peter and Paul, framed what they thought a fair compromise for mixed communities, "to which all the Jews at Antioch save Paul gave in." This is subjective criticism, indeed, and serves only to show how difficult it is logically to work out any theory which identifies, as Bacon does, Acts, chap. 15, with Gal. 2:1-10. On the other hand, Bacon's criticism of the pastoral epistles is on sound lines, since he

⁴A detailed exposition of the position here outlined may be seen in the commentary in Acts shortly to appear in the *Century Bible*.

starts from the objective historical notices in 2 Tim., chap. 4, shows that these are not homogeneous, and, placing 2 Timothy as a whole just after Philippians, argues to earlier Pauline letters upon which 1 Timothy and Titus, as well as most of 2 Tim., 4: 9-end, are based.

His discussion of the Johannine writings is very searching and instructive, quite apart from the exact conclusions reached. Holding strongly to the apostolic authorship of the Apocalypse, *ca.* 90-95 (the aged seer, perhaps, using the help of another to reduce his visions to writing), he naturally assigns the almost contemporary epistles to an unknown Ephesian elder (not the elder John, whose presence in "Asia" he disputes), to whom he also credits the first literary form given to the Johannine gospel material (esp. *Logia*). Our present gospel is a working over of this first sketch (with dislocations as well as additions) by a less gifted member of the same Ephesian circle, whose hand is specially manifest in the appendix (chap. 21).

Many other points call for notice, such as his late dates for several sub-apostolic writings—*e. g.*, *Didaché*, 120-50, or 131-60 (its present form); Papias's *Expositions*, 145-60—and his reading of several parts of the latter's famous preface, including a dubious emendation of the text (p. 42). But space fails. We can only add that the book will richly repay study (notably its descriptions of the various religious ideals operative in the later apostolic age), and not least by those who differ most from its conclusions, provided they are ready to use and abide by strict literary and historical methods.

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NOTICE SUR UN TRÈS ANCIEN MANUSCRIT GREC DE L'ÉVANGILE
DE SAINT MATTHIEU en onciales d'or sur parchemin pour-
pré et orné de miniatures conservé à la Bibliothèque natio-
nale (No. 1286 du Supplément grec). Par M. H. OMONT.
(Tiré des *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque*
nationale et autres bibliothèques, Tome XXXVI.) Paris:
Imprimerie nationale, 1900. Pp. 81. Fr. 4.

IN December, 1899, a French officer, Captain de la Taille, found in the possession of an old woman at Sinope a considerable manuscript of the gospel of Matthew in gold letters on purple parchment. He purchased it, and from his hands it passed into the Bibliothèque nationale. It contains about one-third of Matthew, chaps. 7, 11, and 13-24 being